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Summary record of the 46th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 11 April 2006, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Ashe ..... (Antigua and Barbuda)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Saha

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

Agenda item 122: Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations *(continued)*

Draft resolution A/C.5/60/L.34

1. **The Chairman** drew attention to draft resolution A/C.5/60/L.34, entitled "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations".

2. **Ms. Udo** (Nigeria) said that paragraph 7 (c) of the draft resolution should begin with the word "Establishing". Paragraph 8 should read, "*Recalls* its resolutions 57/278 A of 20 December 2002 and 59/264 A, and notes that there will be a separate report on the independent external evaluation of the auditing and oversight system within the United Nations, including the specialized agencies, as well as one on the comprehensive governance review".

3. *Draft resolution A/C.5/60/L.34, as orally corrected, was adopted.*

Agenda item 124: Programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 *(continued)*

Draft resolution A/C.5/60/L.35

4. **The Chairman** drew attention to draft resolution A/C.5/60/L.35, entitled "Special subjects relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007".

5. *Draft resolution A/C.5/60/L.35 was adopted.*

6. **Mr. Mumbey-Wafula** (Uganda) said that his delegation had joined the consensus on the resolution on the understanding that the provisions concerning the deployment of staff with relevant knowledge to special political missions (part I, paras. 5 and 6) would be implemented in the context of the Great Lakes Conference. With respect to the United Nations Panel of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, his delegation hoped that appropriate action would be taken to address concerns about the Panel's continued relevancy and methods of work, as well as the need to avoid duplication and to enhance efficiencies in United Nations operations.

7. His delegation hoped that part I, paragraphs 7 and 8, of the resolution would be applied in order to address the overlap between the work of the Panel and that of the Conference. When adequately staffed, the Conference could complement the Panel and take on certain aspects of its work. His delegation's views concerning the Peacebuilding Support Office would be expressed at a later stage in the Committee's proceedings by the Chairman of the Group of 77 and China.

8. **Mr. Ekorong a Dong** (Cameroon) recalled that one of the special political missions addressed by the resolution was the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission for the implementation of the ruling handed down by the International Court of Justice on 10 October 2002. That ruling had resolved the various disputes concerning the land and maritime boundary between Cameroon and Nigeria, as well as the question of sovereignty over the Bakassi Peninsula.

9. His delegation wished to thank all those Member States that had supported the Mixed Commission's work, as well as those countries and regional organizations that had provided bilateral support for the Mixed Commission's activities concerning the boundary demarcation process. His delegation also wished to congratulate the Secretary-General for his initiative to inform Member States of the Mixed Commission's work.

10. However, his delegation had been surprised to note the somewhat vague priorities set out in the Secretary-General's report (A/60/585/Add.1) for the Mixed Commission's work in 2006. As noted in paragraph 16.5 of the report, the third and final phase of the withdrawal and transfer of authority had been delayed for technical reasons. His delegation had hoped that explicit priority would be given to the withdrawal from the Bakassi Peninsula in 2006, and had been disappointed by the answers given by the Secretariat in that regard during the Committee's informal consultations.

11. The Secretariat should inform the Committee of the various decisions taken on the matter, particularly at the meeting which the two Heads of State concerned had held with the Secretary-General in Geneva on 11 May 2005. Those decisions had led to two important actions: first, Nigeria had proposed a timetable for full withdrawal by July/August 2006, and second, the Mixed Commission had examined the proposed timetable in October 2005 and had submitted it to the two Heads of State. His delegation trusted that the

withdrawal from the Bakassi Peninsula remained a priority for 2006.

12. **Ms. Udo** (Nigeria) said that her delegation would comment on the matter in question at a later date.

Agenda item 125: Programme planning *(continued)*

Draft resolution A/C.5/60/L.32

13. **The Chairman** drew attention to draft resolution A/C.5/60/L.32, entitled "Programme planning".

14. **Mr. Abelian** (Secretary of the Committee) said that in the sixth line of paragraph 8 of the draft resolution, the words "that it may" should be replaced by the word "to".

15. *Draft resolution A/C.5/60/L.32, as orally corrected, was adopted.*

16. **Mr. Berti Oliva** (Cuba), referring to paragraph 19 of the resolution, recalled that, because certain members of the Committee for Programme and Coordination had demonstrated a lack of political will and a desire to discredit the work of that Committee, no agreement had been reached on the improvement of its working methods at its forty-fifth session. His delegation hoped that that situation would not recur at the forty-sixth session. In that connection, the work of the Cuban delegation had been hampered by the United States Government's deliberate delay in granting visas to Cuba's representatives on the Fifth Committee. Cuba trusted that the United States would, in future, honour its responsibilities and obligations as host country.

Agenda item 127: Pattern of conferences *(continued)*

Draft resolution A/C.5/60/L.16

17. **The Chairman** drew attention to draft resolution A/C.5/60/L.16, entitled "Pattern of conferences".

18. *Draft resolution A/C.5/60/L.16 was adopted.*

19. **Mr. Cardy** (South Africa), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group attached great importance to ensuring the equal treatment of the official languages of the United Nations, as well as the timely issuance of documentation, the provision of adequate conference facilities to Member States and the integration of information technology across duty stations.

20. The Group wished to reiterate the importance of meetings of regional and other major groupings of Member States for the smooth functioning of sessions of intergovernmental bodies. It was disappointed that certain Member States were still unwilling to provide the additional resources needed to address the decline in interpretation services for meetings held by regional and other major groupings of Member States. The problem must be solved without further delay.

21. Timely, easy and rapid access to documents in the Organization's six official languages was essential to the success of intergovernmental processes. Regrettably, the resolution just adopted by the Committee did not attach sufficient importance to addressing the backlog in summary and verbatim records in the six official languages, in the interest of maintaining the Organization's institutional memory.

22. The measures taken thus far to address the chronic problem of late issuance of documentation were inadequate. The Group was pleased that the Committee on Conferences would conduct a thorough analysis of the issue with a view to making concrete proposals on an accountability framework to ensure full compliance with the established rules on submission processes and document issuance.

23. The Secretariat should continue its efforts to create parity among duty stations with respect to information technology and to fill vacancies in the interpretation and translation services at the United Nations Office at Nairobi. It should take further measures to address those problems, including the conduct of a special competitive examination to fill vacant Arabic language posts. The Group wished to acknowledge the important work of the Committee on Conferences and to reiterate its full support for that body's mandate.

24. Lastly, the Group wished to emphasize that any reduction in the length of reports originating from the Secretariat should not negatively affect the quality of the presentation or content of the reports and should also be implemented on a non-selective, flexible and case-by-case basis. The current mandates of the General Assembly encouraged intergovernmental bodies to abide by certain page limits. However, page limits on intergovernmental reports could not be enforced, and the Group shared the opinion of the Chairman of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations that recent attempts by the Secretariat to

impose a page limit on the Special Committee's report were unacceptable. The Group therefore expected the Secretariat to carry out its mandate and present that report to the Fifth Committee in full.

Agenda item 130: Joint Inspection Unit (*continued*)

Draft resolution A/C.5/60/L.31

25. **The Chairman** drew attention to draft resolution A/C.5/60/L.31, entitled "Joint Inspection Unit".

26. *Draft resolution A/C.5/60/L.31 was adopted.*

Agenda item 132: Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (*continued*)

Draft resolution A/C.5/60/L.33

27. **The Chairman** drew attention to draft resolution A/C.5/60/L.33, entitled "Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services".

28. *Draft resolution A/C.5/60/L.33 was adopted.*

Other matters

29. **Mr. Matsunaga** (Japan) said that his delegation wished the Committee to keep open agenda item 128, "Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations", and to continue its consideration of the report of the Committee on Contributions (A/60/11).

The meeting rose at 4 p.m.